

God bless these fallen heroes. And may God continue to bless the United States of America.●

U.S. AGRICULTURE IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

● Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am pleased that last night the Senate approved S.Con. Res. 73, which emphasizes the importance of agriculture in our trade discussions with the European Union. This resolution tells the U.S. Trade Representative two things: The elimination of trade restrictions imposed on U.S. agriculture exports should be a top priority in any trade talks with the E.U. And no trade negotiations should occur, at all, if they will undermine our ability to eliminate these trade restrictions in the next round of ag talks at the World Trade Organization in 1999.

Mr. President, on Monday the president announced in London that the United States and European Union will begin negotiating a new bilateral trade agreement. While I generally applaud any initiative to further reduce barriers to trade, I was dismayed to see agriculture included on the agenda in only a very narrow sense. The many outstanding trade barriers the Europeans have erected to our agriculture exports have been left off the bargaining table.

Currently, the trade in agriculture between the U.S. and E.U. is very one-sided. The Europeans keep out our pork. They keep out our beef. They keep out our feed grains that are genetically modified. Their protectionist policies hurt our farmers. And the Europeans desperately want to keep these policies in place at the expense of our farmers.

So it's understandable why the Europeans want to avoid discussions on agriculture. But I'm surprised the Clinton Administration is willing to move forward with this trade agreement and ignore all the problems we have in agriculture. They appear so anxious to move the trade agenda forward, perhaps to account for their inability to gain fast track authority, that I'm afraid the prospect for further liberalization of agriculture trade will be damaged in the process.

In 1999, a new round of agriculture negotiations are to begin at the World Trade Organization. These negotiations will be critical to setting the rules for global ag trade for the next several years. It is a chance to build on what was begun in the Uruguay Round Agreement—which was the first major trade agreement to address agriculture tariffs, subsidies and nontariff trade barriers.

The United States has much to gain in these talks. We have the most productive, efficient agriculture system in the world. Our farmers can compete with the farmers of any other country. So if trade barriers to ag exports are removed, our farmers will export more of their production, their income levels

will rise, rural communities will prosper and the trade deficit will be reduced.

The Europeans, on the other hand, fear open competition in agriculture. They continue to impose high barriers to U.S. ag products and to heavily subsidize their own farmers. Many Europeans view the next round of talks as a threat to their agriculture industry. They would rather avoid the negotiations.

So we must use all available leverage to gain concessions from the Europeans. But I'm afraid we will surrender some of our leverage in this new bilateral agreement. In other words, if we give away concessions now, we'll have less leverage when we turn to the ag talks in 1999.

And that would give the Europeans, who don't want free trade in agriculture, the upper hand. And reduce the likelihood that agriculture trade barriers will be eliminated in the 1999 talks. That's what this resolution says. Do nothing that will weaken our negotiating position in 1999.

But the resolution also says something else. It says make the elimination of restrictions on agriculture exports a top priority in any discussions with the European Union. To me, this is just common sense.

The United States has a trade surplus in agriculture products. The rest of the world wants to buy the food and fiber our farmers produce. So there is no doubt that our farmers produce safe, wholesome, high-quality products. Yet the European Union does everything it can to keep these products out of their countries. Products sold all over the world are not allowed into the European Union. So doesn't it make sense that the U.S. would seek to negotiate to remove these trade barriers?

But these barriers are not on the agenda for the upcoming trade negotiations. And I think that is wrong. I think it is unfair to our farmers. It tells them that their issues aren't important. We're just going to sweep them under the rug. And go on to negotiate other trade issues.

Well, Mr. President, now the entire Senate is on record. The Senate has stated firmly: Our farmers deserve better. We will not stand by idly and let you ignore the problems of our farmers any longer.

I hope the administration takes notice of our actions here today. And I hope they immediately press the European Union to put agriculture back on the bargaining table.

Again I thank my colleagues for supporting this resolution.●

A TRIBUTE TO ROSS PENDERGRAFT

● Mr. BUMPERS. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the memory of a long time friend, Ross Pendergraft. He was a good and decent man who helped make his community and State a better place. I extend my condolences to his

family and friends, but especially his lovely wife Donnie.

Ross passed away Sunday at the age of 72 in Fort Smith, Arkansas, a city he called home and where he was a former executive vice president and chief operating officer of the Donrey Media Group, which owns five fine newspapers in my State and more than fifty nationwide. Donrey owes its great success in a tough business in large part to the efforts of Ross Pendergraft.

I knew Ross long before I entered public life. He was a man of great personal integrity and professional accomplishment. He was a man of wit, humor, and compassion who made a deep impact on the life of his community. He will be terribly missed by those in the newspaper business and by the thousands of people whose lives he touched not only in Fort Smith but throughout Arkansas.

Born in Abbott, Arkansas, Ross was a World War II veteran, and attended Arkansas Tech University at Russellville on the GI Bill, like so many of us did. In 1948 he joined the advertising staff of the Southwest Times-Record newspaper in Fort Smith, and so began his rise through the ranks of the Donrey organization. In 1961 he was named general manager of the Times-Record and by 1990 he oversaw all Donrey newspapers in the continental U.S. and Hawaii. Three times he was named "Man of the Year" by the Arkansas Press Association.

But he also found the time and energy to serve his community. He was the first vice chairman of the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation, a charitable trust. He was a chairman of the Fort Smith United Way, a president of the city's Chamber of Commerce, a former member of the Arkansas Highway Commission, and he served on the Arkansas Action Committee as well as countless other civic and charitable organizations.

Ross worked tirelessly to get better roads in western Arkansas and to promote economic development in Fort Smith, which is now among the fastest growing regions in the United States.

Though Ross was a man who oversaw more than 50 newspapers and bought newsprint and printers ink by the ton, he was never one to seek the limelight or use his position for personal aggrandizement. So many of his good works took place quietly, behind the scenes, out of the public eye. He was a man who loved his family, loved his community, and loved the newspaper business. And while my State is diminished by his loss, it has been and will continue to be enriched by the work that he did, the causes he served and the example he set.●

TRIBUTE TO B.L. "BUD" FREW

● Mr. BOND. Mr. President, on January 31, 1998, a long time friend and a true hero of the agriculture world retired. I rise today to pay tribute to B.L. "Bud" Frew who presided over